CompleteDegree@Simmons
Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program

Practicum Education Manual

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Welcome Students and Practicum Education Partners

Welcome to the CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW Practicum Education Program. This CompleteDegree BSW Practicum Education Manual is intended as a guide for students, faculty, and Practicum instructors as a means of educating, informing, and supporting the process of Practicum instruction, an essential component of social work education and training. Primarily, the Manual is designed as a resource to help students navigate their Practicum education experience and assist Practicum instructors in their role as mentors and BSW Program partners. It contains information regarding the requirements, expectations, and policies of BSW Practicum education, as well as required forms and documents that support the Practicum experience. We wish our students and professional partners well and look forward to a rewarding Practicum education experience.

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Simmons University and the School of Social Work – Brief Introduction and Background

Simmons University, a private, non-sectarian institution, was founded in 1899 to provide a high-quality liberal arts education, combined with professional preparation, to women at the undergraduate level. The University's Mission, "To provide transformative learning that links passion with lifelong purpose," has been realized throughout its history as its academic programs have expanded and graduates have taken their places as professional leaders in the community. Today, the University is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), enrolls almost 2000 undergraduate students annually, and houses five graduate schools for men and women. One of the areas for which the University has become best known is the education and preparation of graduate-level social work professionals under the auspices of its School of Social Work.

In 1904, Simmons became the first college to provide training for clinical social workers, filling a critical community need, expanding the profession, and offering a vehicle through which women could advance their careers. Since then, the Simmons University School of Social Work (SSW) has been a leader in social work education and an enduring example of the University's signature commitment to academic rigor, strong professional preparation, and visionary thinking. Open to men and women, the SSW offers an MSW Program that has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and a Ph.D. Program for advanced clinical social work scholars which opened in 1983. Throughout its history, the SSW has recognized the critical role that its graduates play in the local, national, and global community and has endeavored to provide social work education in a way that maintains the highest educational standards while remaining sensitive to the diverse, changing needs of students and the clients they serve. As a reflection of this knowledge and commitment, the SSW has created unique and innovative programs that attract dedicated students and infuse a steady flow of competent, well-trained individuals into the profession. These programs include the Urban Leadership Program and the Interdisciplinary Program in collaboration with the College's School of Management. In each of its programs, the SSW seeks to advance the core values and aims of the social work profession.

The Simmons Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program is the most recent endeavor of the School of Social Work. Focused planning for the new BSW Program began in 2010, and the Program opened to students in the Fall of 2012. In June of 2014, the Program was accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). In May 2021, Simmons launched the CompleteDegree BSW Program. The BSW Program espouses the same core principles and values of the MSW Program while structuring its curriculum around generalist practice competencies appropriate for undergraduate-level social work students. The BSW Program was re-accredited in June 2018, for a further 8 years by CSWE.

Generalist Practice

Baccalaureate social work education is intended to teach and train students as social work generalists. The Simmons University BSW Program utilizes the following definition of generalist practice, as articulated by the Council on Social Work Education:

> Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person and environment construct. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice *(Council on Social Work Education 2008 EPAS Standard B2.2, p. 7-8).*

Consistent with this definition, the Program utilizes a curriculum model that flows from the University's liberal arts foundation, integrating the University Core Curriculum, Social Work Program courses, and Practicum Education into a cohesive whole.

Simmons University Baccalaureate Social Work Program Mission Statement

Consistent with the mission of Simmons University, its MSW Program, and the *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* (2015) put forth by the Council on Social Work Education, the Simmons University BSW Program's Mission is:

> to prepare baccalaureate-level students for professional generalist social work practice and lifelong professional and personal learning. Consistent with the mission and vision of Simmons University, the School of Social Work, and professional social work tradition, the Program seeks to develop competent, ethical practitioners who are attuned to the values of the social work profession, embrace a professional social work identity, value diversity, and seek social justice through effective advocacy and social change efforts.

Simmons University BSW Program Goals

Within the liberal arts tradition and guided by the purpose and values of the social work profession, the Simmons University BSW Program aims to:

1. Participate in the fulfillment of the mission and goals of Simmons University and the School of Social Work by contributing to a liberal arts foundation and providing strong professional social work career preparation at the baccalaureate level;
2. Prepare students for generalist social work employment and graduate-level education;
3. Provide students with instruction, Practicum experiences, and opportunities to develop the knowledge, values, and skills and master the core competencies needed for effective, culturally sensitive, evidence-based, ethical social work practice;
4. Provide students with instructional opportunities that will facilitate the development of the critical thinking and writing skills necessary for effective social work practice;
5. Prepare students to become competent practitioners, social justice advocates, policy analysts, and agents of social change;
6. Provide a foundation for students' professional futures, emphasizing life-long learning,

growth, and professional development.

Simmons University BSW Program's Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors: *The Foundation of the Professional Curriculum*

The Simmons BSW Program endorses and follows the expectations of its accrediting organization, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Part of the function of CSWE is to set educational standards that ensure that social work students at the undergraduate and graduate-level are receiving high quality educational and training experiences that will prepare them for their careers. CSWE is responsible for continuously reviewing best practices in the Practicum of social work and regularly updating their *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*. Accredited social work programs are responsible for meeting these standards, which are designed to progressively build students' skills and abilities through their course and Practicum work. The most recent update of the CSWE educational policy occurred in 2015, and it is around these accreditation standards that the BSW Program at Simmons is structured.

In keeping with the 2015 *Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*, the Simmons BSW Program strives to prepare its graduates for generalist practice through the mastery of the knowledge, values, and skills needed for effective, competent, ethical practice. Thus, the BSW Program has adopted the nine CSWE Core Competencies (numbered) and accompanying Practice Behaviors (bulleted) as the foundation for its professional curriculum. This means that the Program's courses, Practicum placements, and overall educational experience are structured to assist students in progressively building their ability to perform each Practice Behavior. Once a student is able to consistently perform the Practice Behaviors that correspond to a particular Core Competency, the student will have achieved mastery of the Core Competency in that area. Thus, by the completion of their baccalaureate education and training, the Simmons University BSW graduate will demonstrate the ability to:

1. **Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**
    - make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to the context
    - use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
    - demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
    - use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
    - use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

2. **Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**
    - apply and communicate an understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
    - present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
    - apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal

biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

3. **Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**
    - apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
    - engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

4. **Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**
    - use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
    - apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
    - use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

5. **Engage in Policy Practice**
    - identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
    - assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
    - apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

6. **Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
    - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
    - use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

7. **Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
    - collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies
    - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies
    - develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
    - select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies

8. **Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**
    - critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
    - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies

- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

9. **Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, ans Communities**
    - select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
    - apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
    - critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
    - apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

The Simmons BSW Program Curriculum: Integrating the University Core Curriculum, Social Work Courses, and Practicum Education

According to Dr. L Dee Fink's (2003) "Taxonomy of Significant Learning," creating effective courses and a coherent curriculum involves attention to key areas of student learning. These include not only providing foundational knowledge, but assisting students in applying what is learned and helping them to integrate and make connections within and among their subjects so that the information they have gained can be useful in their lives and work. This taxonomy emphasizes the need for students to gain knowledge, build practical skills, learn about themselves and others, develop a sense of caring about those around them, and employ this knowledge to become life-long learners. In this way, the taxonomy mirrors the mandate that undergraduate social work education be both grounded in the liberal arts and based in an intentional curriculum design that combines classroom learning and Practicum work to allow students to master the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors necessary for effective, competent practice. The Simmons University BSW Program's formal curriculum design is based upon this philosophy of knowledge building, application, and integration.

Simmons University was founded on and has become known for providing "extraordinary professional preparation with an emphasis on intellectual exploration and rigor, the integration of theory and practice, leadership, and informed citizenship" (*Simmons University Undergraduate Course Catalog, 2016-2018, p. 7*), and it is upon this foundation that the BSW Program is built. In order to achieve its goals and intentions, the Program's curriculum integrates three key areas: the College Core Curriculum based in the liberal arts, BSW Program courses, and BSW Practicum Education. Through the Core Curriculum, students become well-rounded scholars and learners with foundational intellectual habits and abilities, including critical thinking and writing skills, an appreciation for diversity, information literacy skills, foreign language competencies, a foundation in science and mathematics, and an appreciation for the arts. Through BSW courses and Practicum education, students learn the social work knowledge, values and skills they need to be strong practitioners.

Practicum Education Program

Aim and Purpose of BSW Practicum Education at Simmons University

The cornerstone of a BSW program is a well-organized and facilitated Practicum education program. By fostering a strong sense of partnership, shared purpose, and mutual responsibility for student learning with Practicum settings, the Simmons BSW Program endeavors to set the foundation for a supportive and challenging Practicum experience for students. This foundation is structured to support the student's acquisition of the knowledge, values and skills necessary for effective generalist social work practice. By providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the practice behaviors and progressively master the core competencies of generalist social work, Practicum work complements and reinforces classroom learning. The Program's Practicum education component is aligned with the *Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* 2015 which describes Practicum education as the profession's "signature pedagogy." According to the CSWE Educational Policy 2.2:

> Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Practicum education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of Practicum education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and Practicum—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Practicum education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies. Practicum education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program. (p.12)

As articulated in this statement, BSW Practicum education is critical to developing competent, effective, and well-prepared social work professionals. The Simmons BSW Program is committed to facilitating strong and diverse Practicum education opportunities where students are challenged, and their learning and professional development are supported.

General Plan of Practicum Education

In keeping with the primary goal of preparing students for professional employment and connecting the classroom and Practicum, Simmons University BSW faculty members select Practicum education settings that allow students to provide direct services to client systems of all sizes utilizing generalist social work knowledge, values, and skills. The formal Practicum placement Program of the senior year is intended to be part of the larger Practicum experience that occurs throughout the student's academic career in the BSW Program at Simmons University. Simmons BSW students begin their Practicum education journey with service learning. Service-learning is community or volunteer service that allows students to work

within community organizations, gain beginning practical experience with various populations served by social workers and formally reflect on their learning. Service-learning tasks range from administrative support (general office tasks) to direct service (research, writing, one-on-one interactions with individuals, groups, communities, and organizations). Service learners are expected to use their observation skills within their host settings. Service-learning task assignments are informed by agency needs and student experience and interests. In this way, students develop basic social work skills and a sense of professional identity. CompleteDegree BSW students then move to junior virtual Practicum experience seminars, followed by formal Practicum placements during the last two terms.

Practicum Placement Responsibilities of the BSW Program, the Agency, and the Student

The Simmons BSW Program will:

- Provide the agency with a *Practicum Placement Manual,* which states the objectives, policies and expectations of the Practicum placement experience;
- In cooperation with the agency, assign the student(s) to be placed in the agency and/or program;
- Provide the assigned Practicum instructor/supervisor with training and support to enable the Practicum instructor to be effective in their role;
- Assist the agency and Practicum instructor/supervisor in planning an educational program for the student;
- Be available to the Practicum instructor/supervisor for consultation and assistance should problems occur in the Practicum placement;
- Provide advising, mentoring, and guidance to the student throughout the Practicum placement;
- Plan and facilitate the classroom experience and assignments (Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, Social Work Practice I-IV, Social Work Practicum Placement and Seminar I & II) that support and supplement service-learning and Practicum placement;
- Be responsible for evaluating and grading the overall achievement of the student based on the Practicum assessment completed by the agency Practicum instructor/supervisor and the student's completion of any other assignments the faculty require as part of the Practicum placement experience.

The Practicum Placement Agency will:

- Provide a Practicum instructor/supervisor who has a bachelor's or master's degree in social work, at least 2 years of practice experience, and/or who has the knowledge and experience the University considers essential;
- Plan with the University faculty a Practicum experience suitable to the student's needs;
- Orient the student to the agency's policies and procedures, including confidentiality and practices for maintaining safety;
- Provide the student with meaningful assignments and opportunities designed to develop the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for effective, competent social work practice;
- Complete a Student Learning Contract with the student at the beginning of the senior Practicum placement that defines and outlines assignments and expectations;

- Grant the Practicum instructor/supervisor the necessary time to fulfill their responsibilities to the student as defined in the *Practicum Placement Manual,* including the provision of 1 hour of individual supervision per week for senior Practicum placement students;
- Be aware of the BSW Program's Mission and Goals and the Council on Social Work Education's Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors as foundational elements of the student's learning in Practicum placement;
- Provide the student with an opportunity for an ongoing evaluation of the student's performance in the Practicum of social work;
- Communicate with the BSW Program Director of Practicum Education on an ongoing basis and attend scheduled meetings for Practicum instructors/supervisors;
- Complete and provide the University with an end-of-semester assessment of the student's performance in the Practicum;
- Notify the University immediately should circumstances prevent the student from completing the Practicum experience or fulfilling the Practicum agreement.

The student in Practicum Placement will:

- Complete the number of service-learning (40 hours of service-learning in SW 253) and Practicum education hours required for the placement experience (425 hours total of senior Practicum placement hours in SW 370 and SW 371);
- Behave in a professional manner and abide by the *Simmons Honor Code*, *NASW Code of Ethics*, and *Simmons SSW Standards for Professional Practice*;
- Abide by agency policies and procedures, including confidentiality and practices for maintaining safety;
- Take responsibility for Practicum tasks and assignments as defined in the Student Learning Contract and carry them out in a timely fashion using their best effort;
- Participate fully in the supervisory relationship with the Practicum instructor by seeking supervision and consultation when needed and being prepared for supervision meetings;
- Complete and provide the University with an end-of-semester assessment of their performance in the Practicum.

BSW Practicum Education Opportunities

The Simmons University BSW Program is rooted in the generalist model of social work education, and this model forms the foundation of both classroom instruction and Practicum work. The BSW faculty is committed to ensuring that students develop the full range of generalist practice skills and gain experience in various practice areas.

In keeping with the generalist practice model, all agency service-learning and Practicum placement settings are specifically selected for, among other things, their ability to provide students with generalist practice opportunities where micro, mezzo, and macro-level social work knowledge, values, and skills can be learned and reinforced, Practice Behaviors can be demonstrated, and mastery of Core Competencies can be progressively achieved.

Within each of these and the Program's other partner service-learning and Practicum

placement settings, clients are offered a wide range of supportive services using a variety of intervention techniques, including case management, advocacy, information and referral, education, and counseling through work that takes place on individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels. In this way, students in the Simmons University BSW Program are offered a wide range of opportunities in the Practicum where they can demonstrate increasing mastery of generalist knowledge, values, and skills, including the ability to intervene with client systems of all sizes, the ability to advocate effectively, and the ability to influence organizational and social policy. Students have opportunities to engage in service-learning and Practicum placement within agencies serving populations, such as young children, adolescents, or older adults, or organizations offering a spectrum of services and serving people of various ages with different presenting challenges. Thus, throughout their educational experience at Simmons, each student has multiple opportunities to learn, develop, and advance the skills required for competent and effective generalist practice.

Typical Student Practicum Placement Activities

How students learn to demonstrate the practice behaviors and master core competencies include:

- Observing & shadowing the Practicum instructor and/or other agency personnel
- Reviewing case files/client records
- Conducting/participating in-office interviews with clients
- Conducting/participating in home visits with clients
- Providing direct client support, education, referral, and advocacy
- Providing case management and resource linking
- Developing bio-psycho-social assessments
- Developing intervention plans
- Observing/participating in staff discussions and meetings
- Participating in supervision meetings
- Observing/participating in role plays
- Reading and analyzing case studies
- Observing/participating in interdisciplinary case conferences
- Observing/participating in family meetings
- Observing/facilitating or co-facilitating group meetings
- Observing/participating in agency board meetings
- Observing/participating in treatment team meetings
- Completing and reviewing process recordings
- Reviewing and completing agency reports and documentation
- Participation in lobbying, policy analysis, development, and reform
- Participating in professional meetings, agency workshops, and training opportunities
- Developing and mobilizing neighborhood and community initiatives and resources
- Completing agency-based research
- Participating in grant-writing

Service-Learning

Students are introduced to Practicum learning through the BSW Program's service-learning component. The Program requires that students complete 40 hours of service-learning in SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment, which is a foundational course. The service-learning experience can be formally facilitated by Simmons Community Engagement to develop relationships with appropriate Practicum settings, or students can petition to use their appropriate current or past employment experiences to complete the service-learning requirement. Through assignments and class discussion, the Director of Practicum Education ensures that the service-learning experience is developmentally challenging and provides appropriate and meaningful opportunities for students to begin their Practicum work journey.

Through service-learning, students are provided with opportunities to build their skills, allowing them to gain a wider range of practical skills, build their resumes, and be more prepared for the rigors of their junior virtual Practicum and senior year Practicum placements. In addition, because a hallmark of service-learning is self-reflection, students are required to think critically about their experiences, complete writing assignments, participate in classroom discussions and/or out-of-classroom small group service-learning reflection meetings that allow them to progressively assess their emerging skills and competencies, as well as areas needing work and refinement.

Service-learning hours may be paid or unpaid but must involve work with or on behalf of people and be documented by the person supervising the service-learning activity. Students must submit a service-learning time sheet, signed by their supervisor, to the CompleteDegree BSW Director of Practicum Education. If students are using their past work/volunteer experiences, they should submit their service-learning timesheet, along with an essay describing their experience to the CompleteDegree BSW Director of Practicum Education. In addition, student performance in the service-learning setting is evaluated by the service-learning supervisor. Students also complete a self-assessment of their performance. These evaluation tools allow students to continuously reflect upon and improve their Practicum learning. Occasionally, service-learning requirements may be waived for students currently employed in or who have had significant experience in the social service Practicum. Students who believe they have qualifying experiences should consult the CompleteDegree BSW Director of Practicum Education before taking SW 253 Human Behavior in the Social Environment.

Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar

As the second phase of the CompleteDegree BSW Programs Practicum education component, junior-year students complete a virtual Practicum placement. Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar serves as the beginning of an advanced exploration of ethical standards as they relate to practice and values that define the social work profession and helps expose students to the different practice behaviors and activities of social workers.

Students have the ability to engage and assess individuals, families, groups, and communities while receiving consistent training, support, and feedback from their seminar instructor. Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar encourages students to develop skills in building therapeutic relationships with clients and integrating clinical practices into their work.

Students engage in simulated case studies and receive real-time feedback about the interactions both from their peers and their instructors. In this immersive online learning lab environment, students attend weekly live sessions, watch recorded lectures and engaging video content, and participate in simulated client experiences, and role plays. Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar includes simulated Practicum experience and 80 min/week of synchronous classroom learning.

Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar also provides a way for BSW Program faculty to evaluate student readiness for the rigors and demands of the Practicum placement that occurs in the senior year. At the end of Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminary, each student's progress in the BSW Program and in the Practicum is formally reviewed, and a determination is made regarding the student's readiness to move on to the senior year Practicum placement. This review process includes the evaluation of student Practicum performance by the junior virtual Practicum seminar instructor and student self-evaluation. These sources of information are reviewed and discussed during individual Practicum evaluation conferences conducted by the BSW Program faculty with each student, where final determinations about senior student Practicum placement are made.

Senior-Year BSW Practicum Placement

The Simmons BSW Program's Practicum Education component culminates with the 425-hour, year-long, senior year social work Practicum placement, supervised by a bachelor's or master's level social worker. This intensive Practicum experience is intended to broaden and deepen the students' experiences and skills, and allow students to practice the social work concepts learned in the classroom and explored during their service-learning experiences and Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar. During the senior year placement, it is expected that students will ultimately demonstrate mastery of the Program's core competencies and practice behaviors within the Practicum context.

In order to complete the required 425 hours in the Practicum, students are generally in the Practicum setting 16 hours per week, with University holidays and breaks off. Most students arrange their Practicum placement on a two-day per week schedule, taking their required courses in three day blocks. This schedule may vary from student to student, depending upon agency needs and students' course needs, employment requirements, and family obligations. In addition to weekly work within the agency setting, senior BSW students also participate in a weekly seminar (SW 370 and SW 371), led by one of the Practicum Liaisons. The Practicum Seminar is intended to integrate the Practicum experience with academic learning through class discussion, case presentations, and course assignments. Evaluation of senior BSW students in Practicum placement occurs during each term. This evaluation involves an end-of-term formal assessment of the student's Practicum performance by the agency Practicum supervisor, as well as an assessment of the student's Practicum Seminar assignments. These sources of information are reviewed with the student and are used to determine a student's readiness to move on in the Practicum placement and, ultimately, the student's readiness for graduation and graduate study.

BSW Policies, Criteria, and Procedures for Practicum Education

Simmons Honor Code, NASW Code of Ethics, and SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education

All Simmons students, regardless of their major, are accountable to the Simmons Honor Code, which is available on the University website and outlines expectations related to academic honesty and personal responsibility and integrity. All BSW students are expected to abide by the University Honor Code as a condition of their enrollment in the Program. In the interest of promoting high educational, ethical, and professional standards and in an effort to prepare students for their careers, the School of Social Work has articulated the additional expectation that all social work students (BSW and MSW) adhere to the *National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics* and the School's *Standards for Professional Practice Education* throughout their time at Simmons.

Both students and Practicum instructors are expected to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics* as a guide for their activities in the course of Practicum instruction and learning. As the professional organization for social workers, NASW outlines the ethical standards and practices widely accepted by the profession, making specific reference to conduct in practice settings. The NASW Code of Ethics can be located on the website for the National Association of Social Workers and outlines responsibilities for professional practice for practitioners and social work students. All BSW students, as part of their application for admission into the Program, are required to review the NASW Code and sign a statement acknowledging their willingness to uphold its professional standards as a condition of their participation in the Program. Significant classroom instruction during the junior and senior year is devoted to discussing the Code and student responsibilities as emerging social work professionals.

As a supplement to the NASW Code, the *Simmons SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education* outline several additional expectations to which social work students are accountable, as stated below:

1. Self-awareness, self-assessment and self-monitoring: Students are expected to make a commitment to learning about self-awareness and to using self-reflection consistently and genuinely. Accepting supervision and incorporating feedback are critical to this process. As students progress through the BSW Program, they are expected to accurately assess their own strengths and limitations and to display a willingness to examine and change behaviors that interfere with their work at a Practicum placement or in the classroom. Included in this is a willingness to diligently examine and address their own biases.
2. Openness and willingness to learn, flexibility and adaptability: BSW students are expected to demonstrate openness to, and active engagement in, learning new ideas and perspectives. Students should actively seek to understand the worldviews and values of others. As required by the demands of professional practice, students should be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change.
3. Interpersonal skills: BSW students are expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills and capacities needed to relate to clients, agency colleagues, fellow students, faculty, and staff. The capacity and skills to actively engage with others across differences and in situations of conflict should improve and deepen as students progress through the BSW Program.

4. Communication skills: In all oral, written and electronic communication, students are expected to be respectful of others. In electronic communication, students should adhere to professional boundaries. In the classroom, students are expected to take responsibility for their role in discussions. They should strive to use active listening skills and to express ideas clearly. They are expected to self-monitor and not dominate a discussion. Increasingly, as students progress through the BSW Program, they should be able to communicate effectively in writing, both in classroom assignments and in the Practicum placement. It is the student's responsibility to utilize resources to improve academic and Practicum performance when problems in communication have been identified and brought to their attention for remediation.
5. Critical thinking skills: As students progress through the BSW Program, they are expected to be able to frame and address problems in a disciplined way and engage at greater levels of independence in problem solving efforts. Increasingly, problem-solving efforts should be well reasoned, examine multiple perspectives and worldviews, integrate evidence and knowledge, and lead to well-supported decisions and conclusions.
6. Presentation of self: Upon entry into the BSW Program, students are expected to commit to learning what is required for professional behavior. Professional behavior includes the ability to evaluate and respond to the demands and expectations of classroom and Practicum placement environments, and the larger University community. Professional behavior also includes being punctual, dependable, and accountable and being able to prioritize responsibilities. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor can reflect professional behavior.
7. Self-care: Students are expected to recognize their own current life stressors and to seek ways to mitigate the effect of these stressors and Practicum performance. In accordance with the *NASW Code of Ethics* (sec 4.05), social work students should not allow their own personal problems or issues to interfere with their judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility. Social work students whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their judgment and responsibilities should immediately seek consultation with a faculty advisor, faculty member, or supervisor who will determine and assist in the necessary steps and actions related to Practicum placement and course work.

****Acknowledgements: School of Social Work University of Texas, Austin; Hunter College School of Social Work*

These professional standards guide all aspects of the BSW Program, and students are expected to abide by them. Student adherence to these professional expectations is continuously evaluated by faculty members in the context of BSW courses, through feedback from Practicum instructors, and within the ongoing relationship between students and academic advisors.

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Check

The BSW program does not conduct a CORI; however, if agencies require any kind of background checks, screenings etc, these should be done in time for students to begin placement.

Background Checks

CompleteDegree@SimmonsBSW program does not conduct background checks; however,

requirements may differ at each agency. If agencies require any kind of background checks, screenings etc., students must complete them in time for them to start the placement. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they have met all the requirements of the agency, including background checks.

Background checks, including drug screens, are required by many placement agencies. The School encourages agencies to initiate the process of requesting a background check as soon as possible. Students are urged to include anything that might be discovered in a background check on their intake form so that an appropriate placement plan can be made. Students may incur additional costs including background checks, immunizations or other agency requirements.

Transportation to Practicum Sites

The BSW Program is not able to pay for student transportation. Students are responsible for

arranging and paying for their transportation.

Safety Policy and Procedures

The Simmons University BSW Program has adopted the following policy and procedures regarding the safety of BSW student interns in the Practicum. This policy has been created to recognize that violence in the lives of clients can create potential dangers to professional social workers and students engaged in the study of the profession. There are inherent risks to agency staff and students in any situation requiring contact with the public. While fulfilling the agency's mission of providing services, it is the student's responsibility to be aware of the need for personal safety and to minimize risks as much as possible.

The agency has primary responsibility for orienting students to agency-specific safety issues. Practicum instructors are asked to discuss safety issues with students at the beginning of the term. Safety issues can arise in the agency as well as in the community. We urge BSW students and BSW Program agency partners to become familiar with this policy.

Safety Policy

The Simmons University Bachelor of Social Work Program is responsible for providing all students, faculty advisors, and the Director of Practicum Education with general written information about safety in Practicum placement. The BSW Program expects each agency to be responsible for orienting student interns to the safety policies and procedures of that agency and setting. Such orientation should include, but not be limited to, discussion of safety issues in the community, within the agency building(s), with particular clients prone to violent behavior, and about clients who may be sharing living quarters with persons prone to violent behavior, to the extent that such information is known. Security of personal belongings of the BSW intern while at the agency should also be covered. Procedures for the student(s) to follow in the event of a safety or security problem should be reviewed at the beginning of the placement with ample opportunity for questions and discussion as needed.

BSW interns should not be required to engage or to remain in assignments or at placements in

which they feel physically at risk. The BSW Program urges all agencies to make the same accommodations to ensure students' safety as they make for their own agency staff, and in some situations, the agency may need to make even greater accommodations for a student. If a student's concerns about safety interfere in whole or in part with the learning process, the Director of Practicum Education should be contacted by the Practicum instructor to facilitate prompt exploration of the concerns and to seek a mutually satisfying resolution.

Safety Procedures

If an incident occurs in which a student is personally threatened or hurt, or if the student witnesses someone else being threatened or hurt, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Practicum instructor and the Practicum Liaison immediately. The Practicum instructor, agency contact person, or agency director should then contact the Practicum Liaison and the Director of Practicum Education immediately to discuss what actions the agency and the BSW Program should take to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being in the wake of the incident and going forward.

The Director of Practicum Education will document the incident and the steps taken to address it and will meet with the student to assess the student's readiness to return to the Practicum, and any other issues relevant to the situation. The Director of Practicum Education may alert the BSW Program Director and Director of Simmons University School of Social Work about incidents and concerns on an as-needed basis.

Safety Guidelines for Students in the Practicum

Agency Protocol

It is important for students to know the agency's safety and security protocol for office and home visits with clients prior to the start of the placement. If the agency does not have safety and security policies and/or procedures, the Practicum instructor and student should review and discuss any issues related to safety and security in the setting. BSW students are urged to bring their questions and concerns to the Practicum instructor. Regular communication, particularly about safety concerns, is strongly encouraged. The following are guidelines and suggestions that may be helpful to students, Practicum instructors, Practicum liaisons, and the Director of Practicum Education as they consider the particular safety issues in their settings. Specific steps taken by students or agency personnel will have to be determined by the individual situation, the nature of the setting, etc.

Security of Belongings

All students in the Practicum are expected to have a secure place to keep coats, handbags, cell phones, laptops, and other belongings while at placement. It is preferable that the space be one that can be locked, and could be in a desk drawer or filing cabinet. Students should not leave handbags and other personal articles visible and unattended, even in an office with the door closed.

Valuables should not be brought to placement settings. Items of value should not be left in

cars, and should not be placed out of view just prior to leaving a vehicle. Neither the agency nor Simmons can be responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal items.

Safety Issues Related to Working with Clients

When working with clients, it is important to remember that the treatment process often makes people feel vulnerable and may challenge their usual coping mechanisms. With some people, this can contribute to problems with impulse control, and can raise issues of safety for the client, the social worker, the student intern, and others.

There may be times when students work with individuals who have difficulty with reality testing, dealing with overwhelming emotions, and controlling their anger. Some of them may be prone to violence and may possess a weapon. Other clients may be intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, in withdrawal, or may have other medical or neurological disorders. Again, we urge all BSW students to consult with agency Practicum instructors to prepare adequately for handling specific situations that are potentially difficult or threatening, such as medical emergencies, suicide or homicide risks, potential abuse of others, and the presence of weapons.

Safety Guidelines for Office Meetings

If a student will be meeting with a client with whom the student does not feel safe, it is important for the student to discuss the situation promptly and fully with the agency Practicum instructor. Based on the outcome of this discussion, there may be a decision that a student will not see the client or see the client under specific circumstances or controls. However, if it is decided that a student will see the client, several points should be considered. A client's mental status should be assessed. When considering the location of the meeting, it might be helpful to think about what is in the room, whether there is more than one exit, and where each person might sit. It may also be helpful to think about whether to include someone else in the meeting, and what to wear. When discussing the time of the appointment, it can be helpful to think about whether or not many people are around at the time being considered for the meeting. It is also important to discuss the plan for backup and assistance in the event that the client becomes agitated. A student should never see a potentially dangerous client alone without someone else in the agency knowing about the client, the appointment time and the location of the appointment. Students should keep supervisors informed about their schedules at the agencies at all times.

Safety Guidelines for Travel by Car

When a student is traveling by car to an agency or to home visits, it is advisable to know where the student is going, and to look at a map before driving to unfamiliar areas. In general, remember to be alert, and to lock doors and close windows. The student should tell someone where they are going and the expected amount of time they will be away from the office. The agency should have your cell phone number or other information on how to contact you in the event of an emergency.

As a rule, students are not to use their own cars to transport clients. In those few situations where the agency cannot function without staff and students transporting clients in their own

cars, a formal agreement must be worked out between the student and agency.

Safety Guidelines for Travel by Foot or Public Transportation

When traveling by foot or public transportation, it is advisable that students know where they are going and the route by which they will travel. Students are encouraged to carry the least amount of valuables with them as possible. Money, license, keys, and other essentials might be carried in a pocket. If a handbag carried under the arm is grabbed, it is best to let go of it. It is helpful to dress in comfortable clothes that are loose fitting, and to wear sturdy, flat walking shoes. It is also helpful to be alert, and to walk with a purpose, as if one has a clear destination. One should be aware of people in the immediate area.

Safety Guidelines for Home Visits

It is important to familiarize the student and the Practicum instructor with the clients' file prior to the home visit. If there is a question of safety, plan accordingly with Practicum instructors. It might be decided that meeting at a neutral place or going with another worker is the appropriate plan. Someone at the agency should always know the student's itinerary. It is helpful to stay alert and to think about what to wear, which room to meet in, and where to sit. If a student ever feels threatened at any point during the interview, the student is encouraged to err on the side of caution and appropriately terminate the visit. If clients seem to feel threatened by the student entering their dwelling, the student should desist and not force the issue. If a student hears a heated argument from inside the house or apartment, the student may decide to reschedule the visit or call to assess the situation before entering the dwelling.

A student should never see a potentially dangerous client alone without someone else in the agency knowing about it. In general, a cell phone is very useful for students doing home visits. We ask that an agency social worker accompany any student on home visits until the student feels comfortable making such visits alone. Students should not make home visits alone if there is any reason to believe that a potential danger exists. Students should 'check in' with the Practicum instructor or designee after every home visit.

Social Media Guidelines

Social media communities and tools, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google +, Pinterest and various blog sites are just a few examples of exciting ways to connect with others and share information. However, the rapid growth of social media communication tools and their ease of accessibility can also have unintended and potentially damaging consequences to users. Social Work professionals, including students, are expected to adhere to social work values and ethics and engage in professional conduct as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics when using social media communication tools, whether they are using a personal site or an agency site.

Common issues that social workers need to understand and manage when utilizing social media include, but are not limited to, privacy and confidentiality (Section 1.07), conflicts of interest and dual relationships (Section 1.06), and informed consent (Section 1.03) in our relationships with clients, colleagues and in our practice settings. Utilizing social media communication tools

as a social work professional requires ongoing attention to these ethical challenges.

Professional vs. Personal Use of Social Media

As a social work professional, it is important to consider whether you are using social media channels for professional activities such as advancing social justice issues, advocating for vulnerable populations, and promoting your professional identity versus using these sites to maintain contact with friends and family. We must be cognizant that the legal, ethical and clinical responsibilities we have as professionals do not cease when we leave the agency nor are they confined to the physical setting of an office. Our ethical obligations extend to the virtual world of the Internet and include the use of social media communication tools whether we use them professionally or personally. According to the 2017 NASW, ASWB, CSWE, & CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice, "social workers should be careful in determining what information or opinions they post, where they post the information or opinions, what language they use, and who might access the information or opinions they post. Social workers should consider how members of their organizations and communities may react to information that social workers decide to share electronically. Social workers should apply the principles of honesty, respect, and social justice, whether their electronic communications are for personal or work-related purposes." (Standard 2.19)

Dual and Multiple Relationships

The NASW Code of Ethics states, "social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships...in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client...and social workers...are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries" (1.06c). The Code goes on to note that "dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively" (1.06c). Our ethical obligations to clients, colleagues and other professionals are no different when using social media channels.

Privacy Settings and Interpersonal Interaction via Social Media

Managing friend requests and maintaining privacy settings is critical regardless of whether you use social media for personal and/or professional reasons. Allowing clients, former clients, or others, such as supervisors (and Practicum instructors) in your professional circle to cross into your personal life may complicate and blur your professional boundaries. As a professional, for all social media accounts, you must fully consider the extent of your privacy settings, how you will manage friend requests, your level of self-disclosure and how you will monitor wall posts or other interactions. Be aware that if you do not employ any privacy settings on your social media accounts, your profiles are public.

All professionals must evaluate the scope of their social media connections. Since this is still an emerging professional topic, some professionals may be cautious and guarded in their use of social media while others may be more open. It is your responsibility as a professional social worker to abide by the Code of Ethics, including your virtual communications and use social work values and principles to guide your interactions.

Maintaining Confidentiality and Privacy

There is a huge potential for unintentionally sharing protected information when using social media so always use good ethical judgment. Be cautious when you post information about your agency (Practicum placement and classroom work, if you are a student) or agency staff. Do not post confidential or private information about clients or colleagues. Be aware of agency policies regarding the use of social media and scrupulously follow agency policies. Do not discuss a client, patient or situation on a social media site even if you are disguising the information.

Respect Time and Property

Before using social media communication tools on behalf of your agency, be sure to seek approval of any messages or posts. Be careful not to endorse or promote a product, cause or position without prior approval. If you have personal sites, maintain them on your own time using your own computer. (If you are a student, your time in the Practicum and the resources provided to you in your Practicum placement are to be used for Practicum related matters.)

Be Accurate and Authentic

Do not pretend to be someone else or hide your identity when using social media. Be clear if you are sharing personal views and use good judgment regarding sensitive issues. Verify information before you post it, correct mistakes in a timely manner and be aware of legal liability issues such as copyright infringement, defamation and posting proprietary information.

Think Before You Post

When social workers post information on blogs, Websites, and social networking sites, they should be aware that others may use, share, and adapt their messages. For instance, if a social worker posts a written article, photo, or video online, others may edit the posting and share it with others. Postings and other electronic messages may be misinterpreted, misrepresented, or taken out of context. Although it would be unreasonable to expect social workers to keep track of all uses of their postings, when feasible social workers should try to correct misuses of their postings when such misuses come to their attention. (Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice, Standard 2.24)

Do No Harm

Social media channels provide an excellent means to build our community, however, as you navigate these channels, do no harm to yourself, your Practicum site, your clients, the School of Social Work or to the social work profession in the process.

Failure of students to adhere to these standards, or failure to maintain a client's confidentiality in any form, including the use of social media, will result in a disciplinary process, which may include dismissal from the BSW program.

***Acknowledgements: Social Media Policy Borrowed from Simmons University School of Social Work MSW Program

Health Safety

Students should be alerted to the existence of biohazards. They should receive training and information about how to protect themselves from infectious diseases.

Post Incident Safety Protocol

If an incident occurs in which a student is personally threatened or hurt, or if the student witnesses someone else being threatened or hurt, the Practicum instructor, agency contact person, or agency director should contact the Director of Practicum Education immediately to discuss what actions the agency and University should take to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being.

The Director of Practicum Education will alert the BSW Program Director and appropriate deans, document the incident and the steps taken to address it, and will meet with the student, the BSW Program Director, and faculty advisor. Together, they will assess the student's readiness to return to the Practicum and any other issues relevant to the situation.

Where appropriate, Simmons University offices, e.g. the Office of General Counsel, the Office of the President, will be notified about an incident.

The Simmons University BSW Program thanks the Simmons University Master of Social Work Program for sharing their safety policy, which was used in developing the BSW safety policy.

Identifying Concerns in Practicum Placement

There may be occasions when students have concerns about aspects of their placement (e.g. amount of supervision, agency policies, appropriateness of practice-related activities and responsibilities, and/or workload). Alternately, agencies at times may identify concerns about a student's functioning or performance in the agency. When problems arise, it is always important for the student and/or Practicum instructor to contact the student's Practicum Liaison immediately. The Practicum Liaison is available for consultation regarding the problem(s), helping to identify the issues and suggesting steps towards a resolution.

If problems persist despite the efforts of the Practicum instructor, student, and Practicum Liaison, then the Director of Practicum Education will be brought in. If all attempts to resolve the issue have not been successful, a determination will be made regarding termination of the Practicum Placement. In the event that a Practicum placement is terminated, a formal review of academic performance and conduct issues may be initiated, as described in this handbook.

Problems in the Practicum Placement Agency

If there are problems in the agency that affect student learning (e.g. not enough tasks, insufficient supervision), the Practicum Director should be notified. The Practicum liaison should conduct a Level 1 Review. The Practicum liaison will discuss the difficulties with involved parties, make an assessment, and collaboratively help to develop a plan. Plans to

improve the situation are always the first step and the liaison will remain involved to monitor progress towards change. If these efforts are unsuccessful, a Level 2 Review will be convened.

Concerns Regarding Student Performance and Conduct in Practicum Placement

The School of Social Work requests that the Practicum instructor notify the Director of Practicum Education promptly regarding any concerns about the student's performance or conduct in the agency. If needed, a meeting of appropriate parties (Director of Practicum Education, student, Practicum instructor and, at times, the BSW Program Director) will be held to assess and locate areas of difficulty. Plans are generally made to alleviate or resolve problems by carefully designed and monitored strategies. The outcome of a meeting will include a plan of action, written by the Practicum Liaison, with copies distributed to the student and Practicum instructor and the Practicum Director. Goals set forth will be reviewed periodically. The Practicum director and Practicum instructor remain in close communication with each other and the student throughout this process. The Director of Practicum Education and BSW Program Director may decide, in consultation with the SSW Director, to meet with the student to address the concerns raised. The Director of Practicum Education, or other faculty teaching the Practicum seminar course, will issue an academic warning to address and document the problems highlighted. The instructor develops a revised learning plan as described above. Some incidents of student conduct related to Practicum may warrant a review of academic performance and conduct issues (described in this handbook), as well as immediate termination from a Practicum placement.

Social Work education and training is an exciting and rewarding time of learning, growth, and change that can also be quite demanding. As a result, students occasionally encounter difficulties in meeting the standards and expectations of the Program. BSW Program faculty and administrators endeavor to assist each student in meeting their educational and professional goals and objectives and working through difficulties as they arise.

Supportive Educational Services

The Center for Student Success provides a range of services to students experiencing academic difficulty in courses or in the Practicum. Academic problems in the Practicum placement are often in the area of writing, which may appear in process recordings and in agency record keeping. The Center for Student Success offers workshops and individual assessments of learning difficulties. Individual tutoring is also available. The Practicum advisor can help the student arrange for these services if needed.

Additional educational services include:

Simmons University Writing Center

Simmons University Career Education Center
Simmons Online Employment Site: Handshake

Office of Accessibility Services Statement

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is a strategy-based student support office, which serves qualified Simmons University undergraduate and graduate students to ensure equal access to Simmons University facilities, educational and co-curricular programs, campus activities, and employment opportunities. Students who wish to receive academic accommodations for this course must first register due to a documented diagnosis or disability with the OAS.

Following registration, OAS provides eligible students with an Academic Accommodation Authorization document to share with the faculty members of their choosing to confirm their authorized accommodations. Students are not eligible to receive or use accommodations in any course until they have provided their Academic Accommodation Authorization document to the course's instructor. Accommodations are applied on a prospective basis; students are not eligible to apply accommodations on a retroactive basis.

The OAS is physically located on the first floor of Lefavour Hall in the Center for Student Success and is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. OAS services are fully available for online students via remote access. For more information about the services and accommodations available through the Office of Accessibility Services, please review the OAS website or write to OAS at access@simmons.edu.

Academic and Performance Standards for BSW Students

Students admitted into the BSW Program at Simmons University are expected to uphold the academic and professional standards of the Program and are regularly evaluated throughout their academic careers.

In order to be retained in the BSW Program, students must meet the following standards:

Academic Standards:

- ✔ Maintain an overall grade point average of at least 2.0
- ✔ Pass all required Social Work courses with at least a C or better

Professional Standards:

- ✔ Complete all required service-learning and Practicum placement hours
- ✔ Receive a satisfactory *Student Practicum Assessment* from the Practicum supervisor at the end of Senior Practicum Placement and Seminar (SW 370 and SW 370)
- ✔ Adhere to the *Simmons University Honor Code*
- ✔ Adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*
- ✔ Adhere to the *SSW Standards for Professional Practice Education*

Course Grading and Social Work Student Grading Policy

Expectations for individual BSW courses, including assessment and grading procedures, are addressed in the first several pages of every BSW course syllabus and are verbally reviewed with students at the beginning of the term. Students are offered several opportunities in each course to demonstrate their mastery of course objectives that are linked to the Program's practice behaviors and core competencies through a variety of assignments, including homework, exams, papers, presentations, and participation in class discussion and group work. Students are graded using both formative and summative measures, aimed at assessing student achievement and determining the overall course grade.

In order to maintain high professional and academic standards, it is BSW Program policy that students graduating from Simmons University with a BSW will have earned a 2.0 cumulative average in their overall college coursework and at least a B in each of their required social work courses. In the case where a student does not meet the minimum grade requirements in a social work course, an Education Planning Committee meeting will be convened, and the student may be asked to repeat the course before moving on to the next level in the sequence.

Student Admission to Practicum Placement

The Simmons University BSW Program takes great care to only admit into senior year Practicum placement those students who have demonstrated their readiness for the responsibilities and challenges that senior year Practicum placement entails. The ability to enter the senior year Practicum placement component is a privilege that is earned by strong foundational course work and satisfactory completion of required service-learning and junior virtual Practicum experience work. Students who move on to senior Practicum placement have demonstrated maturity, integrity, and professionalism and a commitment to a career in social work by being actively involved in their learning and growth.

The end of the junior virtual Practicum experience marks a critical point in the academic journey of a Simmons University BSW student. It is at this point that students must demonstrate readiness to enter the Program's senior-year practice sequence and their senior Practicum placement. By this point in their educational journey, students have completed foundational courses and service-learning and have solidified their intention to continue as a social work major by making formal application to the BSW Program when they are enrolled in SW 345X Junior Virtual Practicum Placement & Seminar. Students who meet the requirements of the Program are granted admission as BSW students and move on to Senior Practicum Placement & Seminar. Students in their junior virtual Practicum placement are not expected to have mastered the Program's practice behaviors and core competencies. Rather, it is anticipated that they will demonstrate the knowledge, values and skills that are articulated in the practice behaviors and core competencies at a beginning, foundational level that readies them for the rigors of their 425-hour senior-year Practicum placement.

Policies, Criteria, and Procedures for Selecting Practicum Settings

In order to qualify as a placement site, agencies must have standards and philosophy acceptable to the School, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the professional community.

The setting must adhere to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics,
and provide needed services to the community. The agency must be willing to follow school expectations delineated in this Practicum Education Manual.

It is expected that agency staff will offer an orientation to the setting, its services, its safety procedures and its policies for their students. The agency should provide a spectrum of learning experiences with attention to the educational value for the particular trainee along with agency service needs. Client assignments should facilitate student development of knowledge and practice skills. A minimum of one hour per week is required for formal supervisory meetings with each student and the primary supervisor. In addition, time must be allotted for reading process recordings and other reports, planning informal meetings, and consulting with the Practicum liaison and other school representatives as needed. In addition, the agency should assume responsibility for support and/or supervision of beginning Practicum instructors and coverage of student cases at times when the student is in school or on vacation. Since each placement is assigned a faculty Practicum liaison, this liaison plays a key role in the continuing assessment of the quality of the setting as a training site.

Simmons University BSW Program Practicum placement sites are selected because they have:

1. An interest in providing baccalaureate social work students with Practicum training that will enhance their academic learning;
2. A commitment to student learning that is compatible with the mission and goals of the Simmons BSW Program, including a commitment to social work values, social justice, and respect for diversity;
3. The organizational stability necessary to address baccalaureate student learning needs and a commitment to partnership with the BSW Program in meeting those needs;
4. A qualified bachelor's or master's-level social worker on staff who has at least 2 years of practice experience who can provide ongoing supervision, support the student's learning process, and act as the student's professional mentor and teacher;
5. The ability to provide the student with meaningful assignments and opportunities designed to develop the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for effective, competent, generalist social work practice;
6. The possibility of hiring BSW graduates, including those students who have completed a Practicum placement at the agency/organization.

The placement team works individually with students to secure a Practicum education placement with a qualified Practicum instructor. Students begin working with their assigned placement specialist approximately 120 days before the start of the Practicum placement term. Placement specialists engage students through an initial welcome call where they discuss their past work experiences and their educational goals. Students are encouraged to use their Practicum education experience to explore varied social work roles and settings and to gain an understanding of how social work approaches can be applied across the spectrum of services and service environments. Throughout the Practicum education experience, and at the end of each student's internship, the placement setting and Practicum instructor are reviewed by the assigned Practicum liaison and any concerns are assessed by the Practicum Department.

Once a potential Practicum placement site is identified, the placement team, in collaboration with the BSW Director of Practicum Education, contacts the agency to discuss their interest and suitability for student placement and describes the Program's mission and goals, reviews CSWE learning requirements, and outlines expectations for BSW Practicum placement. In this way, opportunities for student Practicum learning are evaluated, and the agency's compatibility with the needs and intentions of the Program are assessed. If all of the Program's requirements for Practicum placement are met by the agency, the placement team adds the agency to its network of potential Practicum placement settings available to students.

****Acknowledgements: Policies, Criteria, and Procedures for Selecting Practicum Settings adapted from Simmons University School of Social Work MSW Program*

Qualifications and Expectations of Practicum Instructors

The Simmons University BSW Program takes seriously the responsibility to ensure that agency Practicum instructors have the necessary credentials and practice experience to make them capable of designing and supporting rich Practicum learning experiences and opportunities for students to develop the knowledge, values, and skills for effective generalist practice. In fulfillment of this responsibility, the BSW Program has the following requirements for Practicum instructors supervising students in Practicum placement.

Practicum instructors (supervisors) must:

1. Hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's degree in social work;
2. Have at least 2 years of experience in the Practicum;
3. Be well-respected as a professional social worker in the site organization and the community;
4. Accept the values and ethical standards of the profession as articulated in the *NASW Code of Ethics*;
5. Be professionally committed to the student and see themselves as a mentor and teacher;
6. Accept the responsibilities that come with training a developing professional, including being present at the agency when the student is there and providing the student with meaningful assignments and opportunities;
7. Be committed to the supervisory relationship by providing ongoing guidance, individual weekly supervision (at least one hour per week for seniors), and providing the student with honest, constructive feedback on the student's performance;
8. Embrace a sense of educational partnership with the BSW Program and see their role as critical to the student's progressive development of the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for effective, competent, social work practice.

In order to provide the strongest, most effective educational experience possible to students, the Simmons BSW Program specifically seeks MSW-level social workers with several years of experience as Practicum instructors. These individuals are often colleagues with whom BSW Program faculty members and/or other members of the SSW community have had long-standing professional relationships and can, therefore, feel confident in the Practicum instructor's competence. In some circumstances, the Practicum instructor may be new to the Program, with no established relationships, but possesses the credentials, practice experience, and longevity at the agency that are needed to be able to provide the student with opportunities to engage in Practicum work that will maximize the student's learning. On occasion, the Program may approve a student for Practicum placement with a Practicum instructor who holds a baccalaureate degree in social work, but not an MSW, provided that the individual has several years of practice experience that demonstrates high-quality work. On other occasions, the Program may allow a student to be directly supervised by an experienced professional who holds a related degree in human services, but not a degree in social work, provided that another agency staff member, board member, or consultant who holds an MSW or BSW degree can provide an additional level of overall supervision of the student. In this way, the Program ensures that a social work perspective is reinforced with the student in cases where the Practicum instructor

does not hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree while allowing some flexibility for students to complete their Practicum placement at an agency that provides an ideal social work learning experience but where a direct supervisor with a BSW or MSW is not available.

Procedures for Orientation and Placement of BSW Practicum Students

The process of placing Simmons BSW students in the Practicum is thoughtful and intentional and begins with orienting students to the expectations and requirements of Practicum placement. Because Simmons BSW students begin their service-learning work immediately upon entering the Program, they are progressively oriented to the linkages between the classroom and the Practicum from the beginning of their educational careers. Discussions about Practicum placement occur early as a regular part of academic advising and through students' engagement with the placement specialist. In addition, the BSW Director of Practicum Education meets individually with each BSW student to answer questions about Practicum education and to create a long-term, individualized, Practicum placement vision that addresses each student's Practicum learning interests, priorities, and areas of need. Thus, from as early as their first term, students are already involved in formal Practicum placement orientation, consultation, and planning and can anticipate their long-term Practicum experiences.

Junior Virtual Practicum Experience Seminar (SW 345X) ultimately sets the foundation for the senior year by providing a vehicle for discussion around the student's preferences and Practicum learning goals. Additionally, it provides a pathway to formally assess each student's readiness for the rigors and challenges of the 425-hour senior year Practicum placement. Students meet individually with the placement team to plan a Practicum placement experience that best suits their educational needs and aligns with the program requirements.

Decisions about each student's Practicum placement assignment occur through a collaborative process between the student, their academic advisor, and the placement team and the Director of Practicum Education. However, all Practicum placement decisions are ultimately made by the Director of Practicum Education, who takes into account not only the student's wishes, but their strengths and areas needing skill expansion and growth. This process occurs during individual Practicum advising with each student and during formal group meetings that occur with student cohorts. Once preliminary decisions about senior Practicum placement assignments are made, students have the opportunity to learn more about the organization and interview with their prospective Practicum instructor and other agency staff members. Through this process, the Practicum instructor, student, and the Practicum placement team and the Director of Practicum Education can determine the appropriateness of the match and, most likely, move forward with planning during the term when the student takes Junior Virtual Practicum Experience and Seminar (SW 345X). At this time, the Agency Agreement between the CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW Program and the respective Practicum agency is completed as a formal demonstration of their joint commitment to the student's Practicum placement experience. The Practicum instructor also receives a copy of the Practicum Placement Manual and Senior Practicum Placement Packet and is scheduled for an hour-long Practicum instructor orientation and training session, conducted by the CompleteDegree BSW Program. The intent is that, before the end of the junior year, the student has an arranged senior year Practicum placement that both interests them and is designed to meet their specific learning needs.

Employment-Based Practicum Placements and Practicum Placement Referrals

If a student is currently employed in a social service agency or generalist practice setting, they may apply to have an employer-based Practicum placement. Please note that employer-based Practicum placements must meet the CompleteDegree@Simmons BSW criteria and are not guaranteed, as all sites are approved by faculty. Generally, the criteria include a different work assignment (such as a different department) and new supervisor. A student's supervisor must be a qualified bachelor's or master's-level social worker on staff who has at least 2 years of practice experience who can provide ongoing supervision, support the student's learning process, and act as the student's professional mentor and teacher. In certain cases, a student's current role and current supervisor can be allowed as an employer-based Practicum placement; however, typically, a student may pursue only one work-based Practicum placement–with the same employer–in their BSW and MSW education. If you have any questions about employment-based placement, please connect with the Practicum placement team.

Orientation and Ongoing Support for Practicum Instructors

The Simmons University BSW Program strives to create a Practicum education program that is grounded in a sense of partnership and shared responsibility with Practicum placement settings. In order for Practicum education to be effective, it is critical that agencies and Practicum instructors are oriented to the Program's goals and expectations, trained in the provision of effective Practicum education, and supported by the Program in their ongoing work on behalf of students. To begin this process, all Simmons BSW Program Practicum instructors supervising seniors are initially oriented to the goals and mission of the Program, CSWE educational standards, and Practicum education policies and procedures through their early discussions with the Director of Practicum Education. Soon after agencies are matched with students for Practicum placement, Practicum instructors also receive a copy of the Program's Practicum Education Manual, which comprehensively outlines, in writing, each of the components of the Practicum education Program. The process of formal orientation, training, and support continues through scheduled virtual meetings or by telephone, prior to the beginning of each term.

Practicum instructors supervising seniors attend one orientation and training meeting a month prior to the start of a term. The meeting is designed to orient Practicum instructors and to formally begin to build the relationship between the Program and the agency. During this orientation, CompleteDegree BSW Practicum Director will review the Program's goals, expectations, and procedures for student Practicum instruction and discuss Program linkages to the *CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*. This includes a detailed discussion of the Program's core competencies and practice behaviors and ways to implement student assignments that focus on their progressive mastery of the knowledge, values, and skills of competent generalist practice. In addition, the faculty provides formal training on typical student challenges and concerns, skills of effective mentoring and supervision, and gatekeeping responsibilities. Finally, the forms and documents that relate to each phase of Practicum placement, as well as assessment protocols, are reviewed. This orientation also provides a forum for open discussion and sharing of expertise among Practicum instructors as they anticipate the benefits and potential challenges of Practicum instruction.

Procedures for Monitoring BSW Students in Practicum Placement

The process of monitoring students in Practicum placement is an important one that is intended to ensure that students' Practicum learning needs are being met and that Practicum instructors feel supported in their work on behalf of students. Thus, it is critical that the process be appropriately planned and structured. To set the foundation for Practicum learning, each senior BSW student in Practicum placement completes a Student Learning Contract, in partnership with their Practicum instructor, at the beginning of the Practicum placement experience. This contract outlines key student responsibilities, assignments, and expectations in the Practicum. It also describes specific learning objectives that are aligned with the Program's core competencies and related practice behaviors. For each of the core competencies, students and Practicum instructors develop assignments aimed at providing the student with opportunities to develop emerging knowledge, values and skills. The Learning Contract also specifies the ways in which the student's performance of the required practice behaviors and growing mastery of the core competencies will be measured and assessed. In this way, the Learning Contract not only makes expectations clear, but provides a specific vehicle through which student Practicum learning can be monitored.

As a formal way to monitor students in the Practicum, the Director of Practicum Education has ongoing contact with each Practicum instructor who is supervising a senior in BSW Practicum placement. This contact occurs through check-in telephone calls and emails and through a formal virtual Practicum visit with the student and Practicum instructor at the agency once each semester. These meetings provide an opportunity for the student and Practicum instructor to describe the student's learning experience in general, detail the assignments that the student is engaged in, and discuss the student's progressive demonstration of the Program's practice behaviors and mastery of the core competencies. In addition, these meetings provide a forum for the face-to-face discussion of any difficulties that have emerged in the Practicum experience so that a plan can be made to resolve them. The Director of Practicum Education may decide to make more than one virtual visit to the agency to provide consultation and support to the student and Practicum instructor as needed.

Finally, BSW students in Practicum placement are monitored through their weekly participation in Program courses, Social Work Practicum Placement and Seminar I & II. Each of these courses is taken concurrently with some phase of Practicum placement, integrates classroom discussion of the Practicum placement experience into the course content, and has specific required assignments that connect practice and classroom learning. These assignments include Practicum placement journals, process recordings, papers, presentations, and projects.

Procedures for Maintaining Practicum Liaison Contacts with Practicum Education Settings

As detailed in the previous section, the Simmons BSW Program maintains ongoing contact with senior Practicum education settings through a series of regular telephone calls, emails, or virtual site visits to the agency to meet with the Practicum instructor and student. This process is conducted directly by the BSW Director of Practicum Education, who is ultimately responsible for student Practicum learning. The Simmons BSW Program is small, and therefore, additional Practicum liaisons between the Program and Practicum setting are not utilized. Students and Practicum instructors have direct access to the Director of Practicum

Education and can easily enlist the Director of Practicum Education for consultation when needed, allowing for a closer level of supervision and support. This can be especially important when difficulties or issues arise in the Practicum placement and need to be resolved quickly. In addition to the ongoing contact that occurs between the Program and the Practicum education setting throughout the term, formal group meetings with all Practicum instructors are held at the beginning of each term. These meetings provide orientation, continuity, training, and support for each Practicum instructor and, by extension, the Practicum setting as a whole.

Assessment of Student Practicum Performance

BSW Practicum learning is ultimately evaluated by the student's demonstration of the practice behaviors and gradual mastery of the core competencies necessary for effective, generalist social work practice. In the Simmons BSW Program, this learning is assessed through multiple evaluation systems. These include coursework that is completed in conjunction with service-learning and Practicum placement, and the formal, written evaluation of the student's Practicum performance, completed by the agency Practicum instructor at the conclusion of the placement. During the senior Practicum experience, the BSW Director of Practicum Education and the Practicum instructor jointly monitor students' ability to demonstrate social work knowledge, values, and skills and the capacity to integrate academic learning with the Practicum experience. Students' emerging practice behaviors and competencies in the Practicum are assessed in the classroom through content and graded assignments that are linked to concurrent courses. For juniors, this includes participation in class discussion, homework assignments, and completion of the interactive course contents that are part of the Junior Virtual Practicum Placement and Seminar course. For seniors, evaluation of Practicum learning occurs in the classroom through participation in class discussion and the completion of multiple graded assignments that are part of the Social Work Practicum Placement and Seminar I & II. These include weekly workbook assignments, student Practicum journal, process recordings, agency papers and presentation. Students in Practicum placement are expected to complete high-quality coursework and ultimately achieve a B or better for each semester.

In addition to the evaluation of Practicum learning that occurs in the classroom, senior Practicum learning is evaluated within the agency setting. This occurs by monitoring the student's progressive mastery of the Program's practice behaviors and core competencies through the successful completion of the goals and assignments outlined in their Student Learning Contract. Student progress is assessed through ongoing, weekly supervision with the agency Practicum instructor and through regular check-in contacts and meetings between the Practicum instructor, student, and BSW Director of Practicum Education. Through this ongoing process, students' strengths, as well as areas of difficulty and/or gaps in learning can be identified and remedied. Finally, senior BSW students are formally assessed, in writing, by their Practicum instructors at the conclusion of each term of Practicum placement using the Senior Practicum Placement Student Assessment, respectively. Each of these assessments has been intentionally linked to the Program's core competencies and designed to measure each of the Program's practice behaviors. Utilizing these assessment questionnaires, Practicum instructors provide an evaluation of the student's Practicum performance in narrative form, highlighting strengths and perceived areas of need. In the case where a student does not meet the minimum requirements for the Practicum, an Education Planning Committee meeting will be convened and the student may be asked to repeat the Practicum placement and/or associated coursework or take other remedial action.

The Senior Practicum Placement Student Assessment, completed at the end of each term, directly measures student performance in relation to the Program's practice behaviors and core competencies. Therefore, it provides a focal point for conversation between the student and Practicum supervisor through which future learning and performance can be enhanced. By providing a description and evaluation of the student's strengths and areas needing improvement, this assessment guides student growth from the first to the second term. In addition, it serves as one of the primary tools used to evaluate a student's readiness for graduation, employment, and graduate study.

Assessment of Practicum Setting Effectiveness

In addition to the assessment of student learning and achievement in the Practicum, it is critical for Programs to evaluate Practicum setting and instructor effectiveness in providing a rich learning experience where students can integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of generalist social work practice. In the Simmons BSW Program this is done informally through the Director of Practicum Education's observation of the Practicum experience, conversations with the student, and interactions with the agency Practicum instructor and other staff members during the course of the placement. In addition, Practicum setting effectiveness is formally evaluated through the Student Evaluation of Practicum Setting instrument, completed by the student at the conclusion of the placement. This written assessment allows the student to assess the effectiveness of the Practicum setting in meeting their overall learning needs, including the provision of experiences and assignments that allow the student to learn and demonstrate the practice behaviors and core competencies. In addition, students are able to assess the Practicum instructor's effectiveness in providing ongoing mentorship, guidance, and supervision. The Director of Practicum Education uses each of these pieces of information to evaluate the Practicum setting and instructor and to determine if the agency will continue to be used as a placement for students. In this way, student learning and Practicum placement effectiveness can be monitored and evaluated, allowing for a strong Practicum education program where knowledge and skill acquisition can be maximized.

Identifying Concerns in Practicum Placement

There may be occasions when students have concerns about aspects of their placement (e.g. amount of supervision, agency policies, appropriateness of practice-related activities and responsibilities, and/or workload). Alternately, agencies at times may identify concerns about a student's functioning or performance in the agency. When problems arise, it is always important for the student and/or Practicum instructor to contact the Director of Practicum Education early on. The Director of Practicum Education is available for consultation regarding the problem(s), helping to identify the issues and suggesting steps towards a resolution. If problems persist despite the efforts of the Practicum instructor, student, and Director of Practicum Education to resolve them, a determination will be made regarding termination of the Practicum Placement. In the event that a Practicum placement is terminated, a formal review of academic performance and conduct issues may be initiated, as described in this BSW student handbook.

Problems in the Practicum Placement Agency

If there are problems in the agency that affect student learning (e.g. not enough tasks,

insufficient supervision), the Director of Practicum Education should be notified. The Director of Practicum Education discusses the difficulties with all involved parties, makes an assessment and collaboratively helps to develop a plan. The agency training director and/or BSW Program Director may join in this process. Plans to improve the situation are always the first step and the Director of Practicum will remain involved to monitor progress towards changes that are being initiated. If, for example, supervision time has not been adequate, the School would work with the agency to address this problem. If the agency is unable to provide a sufficient level of training and supervision, the student will be placed in a new setting. Concerns Regarding Student Performance and Conduct in Practicum Placement The School of Social Work requests that the Practicum instructor notify the Director of Practicum Education promptly regarding any concerns about the student's performance or conduct in the agency. If needed, a meeting of appropriate parties (Director of Practicum Education, student, Practicum instructor and, at times, the BSW Program Director) will be held to assess and locate areas of difficulty. Plans are generally made to alleviate or resolve problems by carefully designed and monitored strategies. The outcome of a meeting will include a plan of action, written by the Director of Practicum Education, with copies distributed to the student and Practicum instructor. Goals set forth will be reviewed periodically. The Director of Practicum and Practicum instructor remain in close communication with each other and the student throughout this process. The Director of Practicum Education and BSW Program Director may decide, in consultation with the SSW Director, to meet with the student to address the concerns raised. The Director of Practicum Education, or other faculty teaching the Practicum seminar course, will issue an academic warning to address and document the problems highlighted. The instructor develops a revised learning plan as described above. Some incidents of student conduct related to Practicum may warrant a review of academic performance and conduct issues (described in this handbook), as well as immediate termination from a Practicum placement.

Termination of Practicum Placement

If attempts to resolve the problem fail, a student may be asked to leave the placement. In the case of this occurrence, at the discretion of the Director of Practicum Education, there are a few possible outcomes: a) The student may be placed in a different agency and be asked to extend the required hours, b) The student may receive an "F" in their current Practicum seminar course, c) The student may be reviewed for academic performance or conduct issues, as described in this handbook.

Student Appeals Process/Grievance Procedure

BSW students who disagree with decisions made regarding their academic and professional performance will have the right to appeal these decisions. The appeals process for any student in the BSW Program is as follows:

1. Any student who has a grievance with a BSW faculty member or faculty committee should provide written documentation of the student’s grievance to the particular faculty member or committee and attempt to resolve the issue;
2. If the student is unable to obtain a satisfactory resolution of the grievance with the faculty member or committee involved, the student should provide documentation of the grievance, in writing, to the BSW Program Director. Students submitting documentation of a grievance will be contacted by the BSW Program Director within 7 days for a

consultation meeting. After consulting with the student and any other involved parties, the BSW Director will render a decision regarding the grievance within 10 days;

3. In the event that the student does not obtain a satisfactory resolution of a grievance within the BSW Program, the student has the option of contacting the SSW Director and providing documentation of the grievance in writing. Following a consultation meeting with the student to review the grievance, the SSW Director will render a decision, which shall be final.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Chartered in 1899 and opened in 1902, Simmons is first and foremost an academic community whose goals include preparing students and other members of the Simmons community to be well informed, open-minded, and respectful of the values and diversity of others.

Simmons is, therefore, committed to the following principles:

- We support equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons, based on each individual's qualifications and fitness, and we seek to administer our university policies without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or parental status, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, ancestry, disability, veterans' status or genetic predisposition.
- We strive to administer our educational programs and activities, as well as the employment opportunities we provide, in accordance with all relevant state and federal requirements and implementing regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Titles I and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Massachusetts Equal Rights Law (M.G.L. 93, Section 102 et seq.), and Equal Pay Act, and Chapter 151B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, as amended.
- We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to individuals with disabilities, including our online/digital services and offerings. We recognize that in the virtual/online learning environment, technology-dependent teaching and learning processes may create unique and unanticipated access barriers. We encourage individuals to contact us if an obstacle to access is found to exist. (See below for how to do so.)
- We seek to build and maintain a Simmons where the diversity of our community members is met with understanding, respect, and encouragement, and where unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation by any member of the administration, faculty, staff, or student body against any other individual will be investigated, evaluated and redressed. The College does not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of its employees or students or retaliation against those who report incidents of unlawful behavior or those who cooperate in the investigation of such complaints.

Simmons Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Visitors

Title IX Federal law states that all students have the right to an education free of gender-based discrimination. Title IX requires Simmons to respond to reports of sexual harassment, which under the Title IX regulations includes:

a. quid pro quo harassment of an individual by an employee; 57 SocialWork@Simmons Practicum Education Manual, Revised 2020
b. unwelcome conduct determined "by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive" as to deny a person equal access to Simmons' education programs and/or activities (including employment); or
c. sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

The Simmons Title IX Policy and a list of resources can be found here.

Additionally, the University has a Consensual Relationships Policy prohibiting intimate, romantic or sexual relationships between students, faculty, staff, contract employees of the University, teacher's assistants, and supervisors at internship/Practicum placement sites.

To make a report under our Title IX policy, please contact the Simmons Title IX Coordinator: Sara Simberg, Assistant General Counsel and Title IX Coordinator, Main College Building (Building A), Suite A-230; 617-521-3289; sara.simberg@simmons.edu

Simmons University prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Please see the University's Notice of Non-Discrimination for information on how to report concerns or questions relating to sex discrimination.

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

If you believe you have been subjected to gender-based misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual violence, gender discrimination, stalking, exploitation), please contact our Title IX Coordinator, at (617) 521-2768 who is located in Room E-200 in the Main Campus Building.

Students Reporting Discrimination or Retaliation

If you are a student and you believe you have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation, please contact the Dean of your College, the Director of your Program or the Dean for Student Life. The Dean for Student Life can be found in C-115 of the Main Campus Building and at 617-521-2117.

Reporting a web/online accessibility barrier

Please use this form. We are committed to making our programs and activities accessible to all individuals.

For Advice on Whom to Contact about a Concern or Incident

If you are unsure of where to bring complaints or concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please contact the Office of the General Counsel in E-200 in the Main Campus Building or call 617-521-2276.

Gender-Based Misconduct Policy

This Gender-Based Misconduct Policy ("Policy") governs all community members, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, those employed by others but working on the Simmons campus, and visitors to Simmons. The Policy defines the behavior that Simmons identifies as prohibited gender-based misconduct, the process for addressing such conduct, and the potential sanctions for engaging in prohibited conduct. This Policy expressly prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and intimate partner violence.

In addition to the foregoing, the Policy and the Simmons Title IX website also:

- Explain how to report incidents of gender-based misconduct to Simmons. ● Detail the process for assessing, investigating, and resolving complaints of gender-based misconduct, including the implementation of interim measures when appropriate, and the use of sanctions against those who violate the Policy.
- Identify on and off campus resources available to individuals impacted by gender-based misconduct, and how to access those resources.
- Identify Simmons's Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinators and other members of the Title IX team.

The Simmons Gender-Based Misconduct Policy can be found here. If you have any questions about the Policy, please contact the Title IX Coordinator or other member of the Title IX Team.

Bias Response Protocol

Simmons is committed to inclusive excellence in all aspects of an individual's community experience. Our values, vision and mission mandate that we strive to create an environment that is free of bias, prejudice, discrimination and hurtful acts. Individuals who believe they have experienced or encountered bias, harassment or discrimination can utilize the Simmons bias response protocol to have their concern addressed. Information about protocol can be accessed here.

Student Professional Liability Insurance

The University carries a blanket insurance policy with the United Educators. The policy covers each student in Practicum placement. The limits of liability are $1,000,000 for each claim and $3,000,000 aggregate. If you wish to receive a copy of our policy, please contact the Practicum Education Department.